

Message Text

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UNCLAS STATE 154409 TOSEC 050045

FOLLOWING REPEAT TEL AVIV 4144 ACTION SECSTATE INFO AMMAN BEIRUT
CAIRO DAMASCUS JERUSALEM ROME AND COPENHAGEN 30 JUN 75

QUOTE

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 4144

ROME PLEASE PASS AMB TOON

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, XF, US, IS, EG
SUBJ: ISRAELI PRESS ON NEGOTIATIONS FOR INTERIM
SETTLEMENT WITH EGYPT

SUMMARY: ISRAELI PRESS HIGHLIGHTS JUNE 29 CABINET
DECISION TO SEEK FURTHER CLARIFICATIONS
RE US AND GOE VIEWS ON INTERIM AGREEMENT, RECALL
OF AMBASSADOR DINITZ, AND REPORTED TRANSMISSION
OF NEW MESSAGE FROM FORD TO RABIN. NOTING THAT
WEEKEND CRISIS ATMOSPHERE HAS ABATED
SOMEWHAT, PRESS ANTICIPATES THAT CABINET DECISION
ON ISRAELI RESPONSE WILL NOT COME UNTIL AT LEAST
JULY 6. COMMENTATORS ANALYZE VIEWS OF CABINET
MINISTERS, AND HIGHLIGHT INCREASING PRESSURE
FROM MODERATE CAMP FOR GOI TO BRING NEGOTIATIONS
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TO SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME, VERSUS HERUT (LIKUD)
OPPOSITION DEMAND NOT "TO SURRENDER TO THE EGYPT
DICTATE SUPPORTED BY THE US". END SUMMARY

1. JERUSALEM POST (LANDAU) JUNE 30 REPORTS THAT, AT CABINET MEETING JUNE 29, IT WAS DECIDED TO SEEK FURTHER INFORMATION FROM CAIRO AND WASHINGTON BEFORE REACHING FINAL DECISION ON GOI RESPONSE TO LATEST EGYPTIAN POSITION. ISRAEL WILL BE SEEKING MORE INFORMATION ON A) EGYPTIAN DEFINITION OF "THE PASSES", B) QUESTION OF ELECTRONIC WARNING DEVICES, C) EGYPTIAN VIEW RE WIDTH OF COASTAL STRIP TO ABU RODEIS WHICH ISRAEL HAS OFFERED AND D) DEGREE TO WHICH EGYPT IS WILLING TO MODERATE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL BOYCOTT. ISRAEL ALSO WILL WANT TO KNOW FROM WASHINGTON WHETHER THERE WOULD BE RETURN TO ISRAELI/US POLITICAL COORDINATION FOR DURATION OF AN INTERIM SETTLEMENT. LANDAU ADDS THAT PROCESS OF FURTHER ELABORATION AND REFINEMENT OF POSITIONS WILL TAKE ABOUT A WEEK. AMBASSADOR DINITZ HAS BEEN RECALLED TO TAKE PART IN CONSULTATIONS. CRUCIAL DECISION-MAKING SESSION IS NOW SCHEDULED FOR JULY 6.

2. LANDAU CONTINUES THAT RABIN AND ALLON BRIEFED CABINET FOR FOUR HOURS JUNE 29, FURNISHING DETAILED ASSESSMENT OF EGYPTIAN POSITION. AFTER MEETING, HE REPORTS, WEEKEND CRISIS ATMOSPHERE ABATED SOMEWHAT WITH ISRAELI OFFICIALS CONCLUDING THAT PRESS REPORTS OF US ULTIMATUM NOW SEEMED UNDULY DRAMATIC. PRESIDENT HAD NOT "THREATENED" AMBASSADOR DINITZ RE PROSPECT THAT, IN ABSENCE OF INTERIM SETTLEMENT, US WOULD SUBMIT OVERALL PEACE PLAN NOT TO ISRAEL'S LIKING AT GENEVA. TONE HAD BEEN LESS DIRCT, JERUSALEM SOURCES SAID, AND PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY HAD MERELY POINTED OUT THAT UNEF MANDATE WAS DUE TO EXPIRE JULY 24, SECRETARY WOULD MEET GROMYKO BEFORE THEN AND THAT FAILING TO ACHIEVE INTERIM AGREEMENT USG WOULD HAVE LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO AGREE TO SOVIET DEMAND FOR RE-CONVENING GENEVA CONFERENCE.

3. IN SHARPER TONE MAARIV (HARIF) REPORTS THAT
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PRESIDENT FORD HAS TRANSMITTED NEW MESSAGE TO GOI VIA AMBASSADOR KINITZ OVER WEEKEND, STATING BLUNTLY THAT ISRAEL MUST ACCEPT CONDITIONS FOR INTERIM SETTLEMENT OR OTHERWISE IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO GO TO GENEVA "EACH SIDE DOWN ITS OWN ROAD." PRESIDENT REPORTEDLY REMINDED ISRAEL THAT USG HAD BEEN GENEROUS WITH MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID AND SHOWN UNDERSTANDING FOR ISRAEL, AND THAT ISRAEL HAD KNOWN ALL ALONG WHERE US STOOD ON INERIM SETTLEMENT, I.E., THAT IT WOULD REQUIRE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM PASSES AND OILFIELDS.

4. PRESS HIGHLIGHTS THAT ISRAELI ASSESSMENT OF ITS RESPONSE IS JUST GETTING UNDERWAY. HAARETZ (MARGALIT)

REPORTS THAT ISRAELI DIPLOMATS IN WASHINGTON HAD PARTICULARLY HARD TIME OVER WEEKEND DECIDING WHAT TO RECOMMEND. MARGALIT WRITES THAT, GIVEN GOE REFUSAL TO MAKE CONTRIBUTION IN FORM OF GREATER FLEXIBILITY RE INTERIM SETTLEMENT, THESE DIPLOMATS BELIEVED THAT DEAL WILL HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED PURELY IN TERMS OF WHAT US, NOT EGYPT, IS PREPARED TO PAY FOR PASSES. THEY BELIEVE THAT US EAGERNESS TO SEE INTERIM SETTLEMENT MAY PAY OFF IN FORM OF: A) \$2 BILLION ECONOMIC AID, WITH COMMITMENT FOR TWO YEARS; B) MOST OF MILITARY AID ISRAEL WILL NEED FOR NEXT TWO YEARS; C) USG PUBLIC STATEMENT, MAINLY TO CONGRESS, THAT ANY EGYPTIAN VIOLATION OF AGREEMENT WOULD MEAN IMMEDIATE AMERICAN ENDORSEMENT OF ISRAELI REACTION INCLUDING FAST REARMAMENT. IN SUM, MARGALIT CONCLUDES, ISRAELI SOURCES IN WASHINGTON BELIEVE RELIABLE AMERICAN PROMISE IS WORTH MORE TO ISRAEL THAN EMPTY EGYPTIAN WORDS.

5. PRESS REFLECTS CONSIDERABLE UNCERTAINTY AS TO HOW UPCOMING CABINET DISCUSSIONS WILL COME OUT. REPORTEDLY RABIN AND PERES ARE INCLINED NOT TO ACCEPT LATEST EGYPTIAN PROPOALS, BUT THEY ARE CONFRONTED BY STRONG OPPOSITION LED BY MAPAM, AND SUPPORTED BY INDEPENDENT LIBERALS AND SOME LABOR PARTY "DOVES" DEMANDING THAT NEGOTIATIONS BE BROUGHT TO A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME IN ORDER TO PRESERVE US/ISRAELI RELATIONSHIP. ALLON REPORTEDLY
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IS AMONG THOSE FAVORING FURTHER CONCESSIONS. YEDIOT (NAKDIMON) NOTES THAT "A MOST DIFFICULT INTERNAL DISAGREEMENT (WITHIN THE CABINET) CANNOT BE RULED OUT", AND THAT IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER RABIN WOULD ENJOY MAJORITY SUPPORT IN CABINET IF HE DECIDES FINALLY TO REJECT EGYPTIAN PROPOSALS. AL HAMISHMAR (STERN) NOTES THAT THERE IS "CLEAR TENDENCY" IN CABINET TO SEEK MIDDLE GROUND BETWEEN DANGEROUS CONFRONTATION WITH US, AS PROPOSED BY OPPOSITION LIKUD, AND CAPITULATION TO PRESSURE WHICH MAY BRING ABOUT MORE PRESSURE.

6. PRESS ALSO FEATURES DEFMIN'S CLARIFICATION THAT HIS STATEMENT, CARRIED BY HAARETZ JUNE 29, THAT CEDING PASSES WOULD MEAN LEAVING ISRAEL WITHOUT CREDIBLE DEFENSE LINE IN SINAI, WAS ACTUALLY MADE A WEEK AGO. JERUSALEM POST SAYS THAT ONE OF PERES' AIDES AFFIRMED THAT THIS CONTINUES TO REFLECT DEFMIN'S VIEWS, BUT OTHER NEWSPAPERS IMPLY THAT CLARIFICATION HAS LEFT OPEN POSSIBILITY OF EVOLUTION IN HIS THINKING UNDER NEW CIRCUMSTANCES.

7. PRIME MINISTE'S MEETING JUNE 29 WITH LIKUD

OPPOSITION LEADERS BEGIN AND RIMALT, PROTESTS BY
EBAN AND OTHER MEMBERS OF MODERATE CAMP THAT THIS
CONSULTATION PRECEDED CABINET BRIEFING, AND CLARI-
FICATION BY FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND SECURITY CHAIRMAN
NAVON THAT RABIN/LIKUD MEETING TOOK PLACE UPON LATTER'S
INITIATIVE ALSO RECEIVE PROMINENT COVERAGE. OPPOSI-
TION HAS ALREADY STAKED OUT POSITION AGAINST NEW
ISRAELI CONCESSIONS. HERUT CENTRAL COMMITTEE ADOPTED
RESOLUTION DRAFTED BY BEGIN CALLING ON GOI NOT TO
SURRENDER TO "EGYPTIAN DICTATE SUPPORTED BY
THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT" AND CALLING ON ALL
"FRIENDLY ELEMENTS" IN US TO PREVENT USG'S "UNJUST ASSOCI-
ATION" WITH EGYPTIAN DEMANDS. LIBERAL PARTY, WHILE
NOT ADOPTING FORMAL POSITION, APPROVED REPORT WHICH
SAID, INTER ALIA, "THE US PROPOSALS ARE NOT WITHIN
THE FRAMEWOK OF AN INTERIM AGREEMENT WHICH WE
COULD CONSIDER ACCEPTING, BUT RATHER A DEMAND FOR A
WITHDRAWAL FROM VITAL STRATEGIC POSITIONS WHILE CON-
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TINUING THE STATE OF WAR".
VELIOTS

UNQUOTE. INGERSOLL

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